

not only to reduce overweight and obesity, but also to encourage exercise of all kinds.

The LIFE Act would provide \$25 million to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for a coordinated national effort to reverse increasingly sedentary lifestyles and diets that are high in fat and sugar. Specifically, my bill seeks to provide the first national strategy to combat the overweight and obesity epidemic by directing the CDC to do three things: train health professionals to recognize the signs of obesity early and to educate people concerning healthy lifestyles, such as proper nutrition and regular exercise; conduct public education campaigns about how to recognize and address overweight and obesity; and develop intervention strategies to be used by the states in everyday life, such as in the workplace and in community settings. This legislation, however, meets the bare minimum for what is needed to address our most important health crisis.

In 2010, estimates from the CDC National Center for Health Statistics showed that since 1980, the percentage of children who are overweight has more than doubled, and the percentage of adolescents who are overweight has tripled. The CDC also reports that Type 2 Diabetes, once considered an adult disease, is now widespread among children. The rising cost of the health care system, including insurance premiums, reflects this epidemic. Today, chronic diseases, many of which are caused or exacerbated by overweight and obesity, account for 70 percent of all deaths in the U.S., and 86 percent of U.S. medical care costs.

A focused national health initiative would provide guidance to the states to engage in similar programs, as mayors of some cities have done. A national focus could lead to changes, such as full participation in high school physical education classes, which dropped from 42 percent in 1991 to 33 percent in 2005. Changes in nutrition are equally critical because more than half of all young people consume too much fat, a factor in the doubling of the percentage of overweight youth. Data also show an increase in unhealthy eating habits for adults and no change in physical activity.

According to a 2017 study conducted by the American College of Sports Medicine, the District of Columbia is one of the fittest cities in the United States and, yet, even here, obesity continues to be a severe problem. Most of the obesity epidemic is exercise-and-food-related. Approximately one-fifth of District residents are considered obese.

I urge my colleagues to join me in support of this important legislation to mobilize the country now before entirely preventable health conditions, which often begin in childhood, overwhelm the nation's health care system.

#### HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF ROBERT C. SWEENEY

#### HON. JOSH GOTTHEIMER

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 15, 2018*

Mr. GOTTHEIMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Robert C. Sweeney—a bold and courageous community leader, a pioneer for New Jersey workers, and a devoted husband, father, and grandfather.

He will be deeply missed by the entire State of New Jersey, particularly our brothers and sisters in labor for whom he tirelessly advocated throughout his entire life.

Bob was committed to fighting for the working men and women of New Jersey. For twenty-five years, Bob served as President and Business Manager of Local 399 of the International Association of Bridge, Structural and Ornamental Ironworkers in South Jersey. As the longest-serving business manager in the history of the ironworkers, Bob fought vigorously to defend the labor movement and New Jersey's dedicated workforce. Bob's unflinching values and passionate leadership continue to live on through the steadfast work of his sons—Robert Sweeney, New Jersey Senate President Stephen Sweeney, and New Jersey AFL-CIO Vice President Richard Sweeney.

Mr. Speaker, I am deeply grateful for Bob Sweeney's invaluable contributions to our community and our state, and I am confident that his memory will serve as an inspiration for our future generations.

#### IN RECOGNITION OF GREG COLLINS, GREATER WILKES-BARRE FRIENDLY SONS' MAN OF THE YEAR

#### HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 15, 2018*

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Greg Collins, who will receive the "Man of the Year" Award from the Wilkes-Barre Friendly Sons. He will be honored during the Friendly Sons annual Saint Patrick's Day celebration on Friday, March 16, 2018. Greg has forty years of finance experience and is the former senior vice president and area president of Wells Fargo Bank.

Greg is a native of Kingston, Pennsylvania. After graduating from West Side Central Catholic, he began his career as a teller at Wyoming National Bank. While working as a teller, Greg attended night classes at Misericordia University, majoring in business administration. While working for Wyoming National Bank and its successors, Greg took on more responsibility, taking management positions and eventually advancing to senior leadership roles. From 2009 until his retirement in September 2017, Greg served as Wells Fargo's community bank area president for Northeastern Pennsylvania. He led more than three hundred team members and oversaw the operations of thirty-seven Wells Fargo branch banking offices across nine counties.

Greg remains an active member of the community in his retirement. He is a member of the board of trustees at Misericordia University, a board member of the Greater Wilkes-Barre Chamber of Business and Industry, Leadership Wilkes-Barre, the Wilkes-Barre YMCA, the Wilkes-Barre General Hospital, and the United Way of Wyoming Valley. In 2015, he chaired the American Heart Association Gala for Northeastern Pennsylvania. He was the recipient of the 2015 North Star Award from the Northeastern Pennsylvania Council Boy Scouts of America, the 2015 Distinguished Leadership Award from Leadership Wilkes-Barre, and the 2015 Community Serv-

ice Award from the Salvation Army. Greg is a 2010 graduate of Leadership Wilkes-Barre's Executive Leadership Program and a 4th-degree member of the Knights of Columbus.

It is an honor to recognize Greg Collins as he accepts the "Man of the Year" Award from the Wilkes-Barre Friendly Sons. I am grateful to him for his forty years of service to the people of Northeastern Pennsylvania, and I thank him for his continued leadership in his community. I wish him all the best on this Saint Patrick's Day.

#### TRIBUTE TO JEFF BALLENGER

#### HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 15, 2018*

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Jeff Ballenger of Council Bluffs, Iowa for his leadership and vision in helping organize 13 honor flights that have taken nearly 3,500 Iowa veterans to Washington, D.C. to visit memorials built in their honor.

Jeff and his father, Bill Ballenger, saw a need to honor our country's aging veterans from World War II, the Korean War, and Vietnam War. The Ballengers have partnered with HyVee, Inc., Casey's General Stores, and others to raise more than \$3 million to fund this special endeavor. Jeff said, "It takes nearly 200 volunteers to help make each honor flight a success. Dad and I might be the front, but we could not do it without the volunteers who are so important in turning the plans into a reality."

Mr. Speaker, I applaud and congratulate Jeff on his dedication and diligence to promote, organize, and fund the 13 honor flights for our Veterans. I am proud to represent him in the United States Congress. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Jeff and in wishing him nothing but continued success in all his endeavors.

#### IN RECOGNITION OF THE 7TH AN- NIVERSARY OF THE START OF THE SYRIAN WAR

#### HON. ADAM KINZINGER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 15, 2018*

Mr. KINZINGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mark the 7th anniversary of the beginning of the Syrian War.

Since the conflict began in 2011, over 500,000 Syrians have been killed, including 50,000 children by the murderous dictator Bashar al-Assad and his Russian and Iranian backers. These brutal regimes not only target civilians with their artillery strikes, but the Assad regime continues to use chemical weapons, including chlorine gas, to kill his own citizens with impunity.

Over the last 7 years, over 30 chemical weapons attacks have taken place in Syria. Bashar al Assad has used these chemical weapons in clear violation of international law, and against countless resolutions by the United Nations Security Council. The world

has seen the heartbreaking images of children gasping for their lives, body bags lining the streets, and horrific videos of these chemical weapon attacks. We cannot turn a blind eye to the genocide before us.

The situation in Syria today is devastating with no signs of immediate improvement. As I have said before, in order to prevent the rise of the next generation of terrorists and killers, we must ensure that Bashar al-Assad is removed from power. I believe the United States of America was put on this Earth to be an example of self-governance and order in a world drowning in strongmen, oppression, and poverty.

Mr. Speaker, it is time for the United States to exert leadership in Syria. If we fail to act and if we fail to lead, we are failing humanity. Failing to act in Syria is a failure on us all. We must learn from history, learn from past mistakes, and take action as a global leader for freedom and hope. Stopping Assad's genocide in Syria is part of our mission statement, and I will continue to do what I can in support of that mission. I urge my colleagues to join me in doing the same.

IN RECOGNITION OF MRS. LILLIE  
RUTH GANTT-EVANS

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 15, 2018*

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the work and service of a dedicated community activist, engaged citizen, and dear friend of longstanding Mrs. Lillie Ruth Gantt-Evans. She will be honored by South Macon Arts Revitalization Technology (SMART), Inc. at the International Cherry Blossom Gospel Extravaganza in Macon, Georgia on Friday, March 23, 2018.

Lillie is a native of Macon, Georgia and a product of the Bibb County School System. After graduating from high school, she went on to attend Crandall Business College, complete nursing training at Hemlock School of Nursing and Spirometry training through Marshfield Clinic at St. Joseph's Hospital. She also studied Early Childhood Education at Fort Valley State University.

Once she received her nursing degree, she began working as a nurse at Macon Hospital (now The Medical Center). Lillie was one of the first African-American nurses to work in the intensive care unit. After five years at Macon Hospital, she transferred to Robins Air Force Base Hospital where she worked as a nurse for twenty-five years. Beyond her duties and responsibilities as a nurse, she has also dedicated her personal life to helping people from all walks of life in her community. In 1968, during her tenure at Robins Air Force Base Hospital, Lillie opened Gantt's Preschool and G and J Adult Day Care. Once she retired from Robins Air Force Base Hospital in 1986, she opened M.A. Evans School to help students whose birthday delayed their enrollment in school. She kept the school running for 52 years without requiring government funding. She renamed G and J Adult Day Care to L and J Adult Day Care to pay tribute to her late mother, who helped to run her businesses while she worked as a nurse.

Throughout her career, Lillie has been recognized for her commitment and leadership in

the community. These acknowledgements include the J. C. Penny Golden Rule Award; the Department of the Air Force Service Award; the Legendary Educator Award; the Humanitarian of the Year Award; an Honorary Doctorate from the City of Macon in 2002; and appointments as Lieutenant Colonel, Aide-De-Camp, and to the Governor's Staff by then Governor Jimmy Carter in 1991.

In conjunction with her professional accomplishments, Lillie became the first African-American to be appointed as President of the Democratic Women's Party and the first African-American woman to serve as Chair of the Democratic Party of Macon-Bibb County.

Lillie's distinguished achievements have been mirrored by her extensive involvement in civil rights. After witnessing several racial injustices against African-Americans, Lillie decided to get involved in the Civil Rights Movement. She marched locally and throughout Georgia alongside Hosea Williams, William P. Randall, and Tyrone Brooks to advocate for civil rights and equal treatment of African Americans.

Lillie's faith has always instilled within her a desire to positively shape the community in which she lives. As a member of New Pleasant Grove Missionary Baptist Church, she regularly incorporates her faith into her commitment to public service by serving as an active participant in the Gospel Choir, the Nurse's Guild, and the Trustee's Ministry.

Dr. Benjamin E. Mays often said: "You make your living by what you get, you make your life by what you give." We are so grateful that Lillie has dedicated her time and talents to improve the quality of life for others. A woman of great integrity, her efforts, her dedication, and her expertise are unparalleled. Middle Georgia shines a little brighter because of Lillie Gantt-Evans.

Lillie has accomplished much throughout her life, but none of this would have been possible without the love and support of her husband, Benjamin; her children, Merita, Chandra, Gregory, and Jimmy (deceased); her grandchildren; and the countless others positively who impacted her life over the years.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join my wife Vivian and me, along with the more than 730,000 constituents of the Second Congressional District, in extending our sincerest congratulations and appreciation to Mrs. Lillie Ruth Gantt-Evans for her dedicated service to the people of Middle Georgia.

HONORING CORA COLE-MCFADDEN

HON. DAVID E. PRICE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 15, 2018*

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the career of a devoted public servant, community leader, and friend, Cora Cole-McFadden, who has recently concluded her service on The Durham City Council and as the city's Mayor Pro Tempore.

A native of Durham, North Carolina, Cora developed her organizational skills and showed a keen sense of justice as early as her teenage years. She and three other classmates desegregated Hillside High School, a defining event that began her lifelong commitment to fighting for equal rights for all members of the Durham community.

Cora's career is marked by many "firsts." She served as the first African American woman to lead a department in the City of Durham and the first African American woman to be named the city's Mayor Pro Tempore. She was also the first recipient of the City of Durham's Diversity Change Agent Award, which is now named in her honor.

In her seventeen years in the Durham City Council and as Mayor Pro Tempore, Cora was a tenacious advocate for safe and affordable housing, accessible healthcare, and empowering youth in the Durham community. She championed the City of Durham Youth Commission's representation at the first-ever Youth Summit sponsored by the North Carolina League of Cities. She helped spur the creation of a local teen center, and constantly sought ways to serve disadvantaged youth.

Cora has served in various leadership positions in the Durham community, including the NAACP, the Housing Appeals Board, the Homeless Services Advisory Committee, the Joint City-County Planning Committee, and the Mayor's Committee for Persons with Disabilities. She has also served on the board of the National League of Cities and has been active in the North Carolina League of Municipalities. Although she is retiring from public office, no one doubts that Cora will find ways to express her love of the people of the Bull City and continue to serve.

I am personally indebted to Cora Cole-McFadden for years of good advice and loyal support—from the time I first learned my district was being redrawn to include Durham right up to the present. She is quick with a smile and a word of encouragement, even in difficult times. Her energy and optimism are infectious—you know you can do the job and you certainly don't want to let her down.

Lisa and I, along with constituents in the Fourth District and colleagues in the North Carolina congressional delegation, want to thank Cora Cole-McFadden for her generous and inclusive spirit and her dedicated service. We wish her and her family the very best as she begins the next chapter of her life.

TRIBUTE TO JESS AND CHASE  
WELLER

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 15, 2018*

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Jess and Chase Weller, of Weller Farms. They were recently awarded the Iowa Farm Environmental Leader Award by the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, and the Iowa Governor's office.

They were nominated for this award because of their implementation of soil health and conservation practices on their farming operation. They have recognized improved water quality and soil sustainability is important for not only their business but also for the farmers working and living near them and the citizens of Iowa.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to recognize Jess and Chase Weller for this award, and for working hard to make sure Iowa is a quality place to farm and live for many years to come.